



OFFICE OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

AN INTRODUCTION FOR NAVY AND MARINE CORPS JUDGE ADVOCATES

INTRODUCTION

For over fifty years, the Office of the General Counsel of the Department of the Navy (OGC) has served as the civilian lawyers and advisors to the Navy and Marine Corps. With approximately 580 civilian attorneys (plus 30 uniformed Navy and Marine Corps Judge Advocates) throughout the United States and overseas, OGC develops legal solutions to business and other challenges facing the Navy and Marine Corps. OGC's civilian attorneys come from a wide variety of backgrounds and possess the expertise necessary to support our clients' needs.

MISSION

The Office of the General Counsel helps the Navy and Marine Corps fulfill their missions through practical and objective legal advice and counsel, effective advocacy and creative problem solving, drawing on sound legal analysis, corporate experience and teamwork. The legal advice and counsel provided by OGC attorneys throughout the Department are timely and responsive to client needs, enabling clients to exercise the full range of discretion available under the law.

VISION

Our goal is to provide legal advice and counsel on business and other matters that are sought after and relied upon throughout the Navy and the Marine Corps. Individual OGC lawyers are fully integrated members of their client's team. Although geographically dispersed, they can draw upon the collective expertise of the entire office in serving their client. We deliver to individual clients the full range of OGC legal services required to accomplish the client's mission.

ORGANIZATION

The General Counsel of the Navy is appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate. The Principal Deputy Counsel of the Navy is appointed by the President. The Deputy General Counsel, Associate General Counsels, Assistant General Counsels, and the Command and some Deputy Command Counsels are career Senior Executives appointed by the Secretary of the Navy. All other OGC attorneys are appointed by the General Counsel.

The Central Office of OGC is comprised of three parts. The first is OGC's senior leadership--the General Counsel, the Principal Deputy General Counsel, the Deputy General Counsel, and the Associate General Counsel (Management). The second is the Legal Services Support Group, which includes the Associate General Counsel (Litigation) as well as a number of lawyers working in specialty legal areas such as the Freedom of Information Act, Ethics and Standards of Conduct, the Procurement Integrity Office and the Office of Legislative Affairs. Third are the Offices of the Assistant General Counsels (AGC) for Research, Development, and Acquisition (RD&A), Manpower and Reserve Affairs (M&RA), Installations and Environment (I&E), and Financial Management and Comptroller (FM&C).

Each of the Department of the Navy's principal acquisition components has a counsel and staff of attorneys to meet their legal needs. Most Department of the Navy contracting is conducted in five major Systems Commands--Naval Air Systems Command, Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Naval Sea Systems Command, Naval Supply Systems Command, and Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command. In addition, OGC provides legal support in the areas of business and commercial law to the Commandant of the Marine Corps, the Military Sealift Command, and the Office of Naval Research.

Command Counsel offices have numerous field offices located throughout the United States and overseas. Approximately 300 OGC attorneys work in some 95 field offices located throughout the United States and abroad. The staffing within OGC field offices can range in size from one to a dozen or more attorneys and paraprofessionals depending upon the size of the client organization, and magnitude of the client's workforce, assets, budget and contracting authority, multi-sited locations, and other variables.

THE WORK OF OGC

OGC attorneys help clients address legal concerns in virtually every area of the law relating to business, Government contracts, property, human resources and other issues arising in a multifaceted, high technology organization. OGC attorneys also represent the Navy and the Marine Corps in administrative cases before a variety of boards and support the Department of Justice in litigation brought by or against the Navy and the Marine Corps in Federal courts. OGC attorneys are regularly called upon to provide legal advice and recommendations spanning many areas of practice. With the consolidation of Department of the Navy assets and regionalization of activities, OGC attorneys are also assisting an increasing number of Fleet and other activities as they assume new responsibilities that were previously addressed by other OGC clients and shore activities. OGC's structure allows for the coordinated provision of legal advice at all levels of the Department of the Navy's principal components.

Typically, the law practice in OGC headquarters and field offices follows core practice areas with respect to acquisition, public employment, ethics, environmental concerns, fiscal issues, and personal and real property law. However, as a reflection of a particular client organization and mission, OGC practice areas can include subject matters such as: information and physical security; law enforcement; leases; licenses; transportation law; construction and demolition; tax questions; bankruptcy; base realignments and reorganizations; invention disclosures; copyright and trademark questions; private party transactions; utility law; admiralty and maritime law and a variety of agreements and memoranda of understanding. Although the majority of OGC attorneys are generalists, approximately 50 OGC attorneys are licensed to practice before the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and specialize in the multi-faceted practice of intellectual property law.

OGC COMPLEMENTS UNIFORMED NAVY AND MARINE CORPS JUDGE ADVOCATE LEGAL SERVICES

The practice of OGC is complementary to, and cooperative with, the uniformed Navy Judge Advocate General's (JAG) Corps and Marine Corps Judge Advocates, with the common goal of providing "seamless" legal services in all areas of the Department of the Navy's work. Coordinating legal advice and research serves the Department of the Navy client well, especially in those circumstances where overlapping areas of expertise between OGC and the uniformed Judge Advocates can be brought together to provide the best Department of the Navy legal advice for Navy and Marine Corps clients. The areas of law practiced exclusively by OGC include commercial law areas involved in acquisition, use, and disposition of property, material, intellectual property (including patent law) concepts and services, as well as fiscal law. The uniformed Navy and Marine Corps Judge Advocates, on the other hand, focus their practice on military law, international law, admiralty law, claims, investigations, and legal assistance to service members. Both organizations practice environmental law, employment law, and ethics, and are responsible for litigation matters arising in their respective areas of practice.

OGC ATTORNEY POSITIONS

The General Counsel of the Navy is appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate. The Principal Deputy General Counsel is also appointed by the President. Approximately 20 positions within OGC are in the Senior Executive Service, appointed by the Secretary of the Navy. All other members of OGC are appointed by the General Counsel. OGC attorneys are hired for specific positions at Navy and Marine Corps Commands and field offices in order to support their immediate clients, but all

OGC attorneys work for the General Counsel of the Navy. OGC attorney positions are generally filled on a competitive basis. Promotions occur as knowledge, experience and skills lead to an increase of duties and responsibilities within a position or through selection to a new position. Command Counsels have delegated authority to approve promotions up to the GS-14 level or equivalent, with promotions to the GS-15 level being recommended by AGC or Command Counsels to the Associate General Counsel (Management). Most OGC attorney positions fall within the GS-11 through GS-15 range of the General Schedule.

ATTORNEY TRAINING

OGC very actively supports continuing legal education to develop expertise in a broad range of subject areas. OGC attorneys generally attend the Contract Attorneys' Course at the Army Judge Advocate General School in Charlottesville, VA soon after being hired. Opportunities for continuing education are also provided at OGC new attorney orientation training, OGC supervisory training, and May and October conferences. OGC attorneys also regularly attend training courses in labor law, environmental law, acquisition law, fiscal law, standards of conduct, and Freedom of Information/ Privacy Act at the three uniformed services Judge Advocate General schools and the Department of Justice National Advocacy Center in South Carolina.

CONTACTING AN OGC ATTORNEY

Consult OGC's web site at: <http://ogc.navy.mil>, or call an office listed below.

Central Office (Pentagon)

Commercial: (703) 614-5066 DSN: 225-5066

Commandant, United States Marine Corps (Pentagon)

Commercial: (703) 697-5357 DSN: 227-5357

Naval Air Systems Command (Patuxent River MD)

Commercial: (301) 757-5361 DSN: 757-5361

Naval Facilities Engineering Command (Washington Navy Yard)

Commercial: (202) 685-9115 DSN: 325-9115

Naval Sea Systems Command (Crystal City VA)

Commercial: (703) 602-1776 DSN: 332-1776

Naval Supply Systems Command (Mechanicsburg PA)

Commercial: (717) 605-6745 DSN: 430-6745

Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command (San Diego CA)

Commercial: (619) 524-7055 DSN: 524-7055

Military Sealift Command (Washington Navy Yard)

Commercial: (202) 685-5160 DSN: 325-5160

Office of Naval Research (Ballston VA)

Commercial: (703) 696-4272 DSN: 426-4272